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Summary record of the 16th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 2 November 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Yousfi ..... (Algeria)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Saha

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Agenda item 123: Human resources management (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 123: Human resources management (*continued*) (A/61/201, A/61/228, A/61/255 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1, A/61/257 and Add.1-3, A/61/274, A/61/319 and A/61/537)

1. **Ms. Noman** (Yemen) said that Yemen attached particular importance to agenda item 123 because human resources development was the cornerstone of the whole development process. Like other least developed countries, Yemen was underrepresented in the Secretariat, partly because it lacked the information technology to respond promptly to vacancy announcements. Special arrangements should be introduced for the least developed countries in that regard, as their increased representation would enhance the Organization's transparency and credibility and the independence of the international civil service. Her delegation supported reforms which would produce a fairer recruitment system.

2. **Ms. Beagle** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management) said that she would respond during the informal consultations to all the questions and concerns raised during the Committee's discussion of the item.

3. In the past, the importance of the role played by United Nations staff had not been adequately reflected in the Secretariat's human resources management and support systems. The Organization must be able to attract and retain staff who met the highest standards of performance, ethics and accountability and to manage an integrated global workforce. All of the Secretary-General's proposals were aimed at enhancing organizational effectiveness. His report "Investing in people" (A/61/255 and Add.1) had been presented in the format requested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and by the General Assembly in resolution 60/260. It covered matters on which action was already being taken, as they fell within the Secretary-General's purview as chief administrative officer. The actions requested of the General Assembly were set out in full in paragraph 401 of the report.

4. The Administration agreed fully with the many delegations which had spoken of the importance of consulting the staff on human resources reforms. The current proposals had been the subject of extensive consultations on an unprecedented scale; the consultative process was described in paragraphs 25 to 31 of the report. The assertion made by the President of the New York Staff Union at the Committee's 14th meeting that the staff representatives in the Staff-Management Coordination Committee (SMCC) were presented with finished products which left no room for negotiation was patently incorrect. Discussion of the proposals had in fact begun immediately after the 2005 World Summit. In October 2005 she had written to the presiding officers of all staff associations worldwide to seek their views. The proposals had also been discussed by electronic means and at meetings throughout the Secretariat. Reform teams had visited 31 United Nations offices, including most of the peacekeeping missions. In preparation for the SMCC meeting, position papers outlining the Secretary-General's reform proposals had been posted on the New York Intranet and discussed extensively by the staff. The proposals had been fully discussed in SMCC and amended prior to their approval both by the management and by all the staff representatives. The mechanisms for staff-management consultation were in place; what was required was goodwill on the part of all concerned.

5. The Secretary-General's new proposals were called "Investing in people" because change required dedicated resources. Such investment would yield long-term dividends in the form of a more professional, productive and accountable United Nations in the service of the Member States.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.